CHAPTER 21: ANOTHER ME?

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MSD PRESENTS CLASSMATE, KAMIMURA YUUKA WA KOU ITTA.

FUFU. YES. I AM YOU.
THE REAL YOU.
Classmate, Kamimura Yuuka wa Kou Itta.
...THE R-REAL...!?
THAT'S RIGHT! NOW, HERE COMES THE REAL ISSUE.
I GUESS YOU HAVE A BIT OF AN IDEA

THE LATEST TANK, VOLUME 4, IS ON SALE WITH RAVE REVIEWS!

クラスメート、上村ユウカはこう言った。

Chapter 21: Another Me?

Story / SAKURAI Tsutsushi

Art / KAWAKAMI Masaki

C-COULD IT BE THAT...I'VE DIED!?
HUH?
THE REASON...?
...HUH?
OH, DARN! THIS IS KILLING THE MOOD!
IS MY LIFE FLASHING BEFORE MY EYES NOW?
ISN'T THAT SUPPOSED TO FEATURE EVENTS THAT HAPPENED IN YOUR LIFE?
!?
IT'S NOT WORTH TEASING YOU IF YOUR REACTIONS ARE OFF THE MARK!

IT'S JUST THAT YOU CAN'T EXACTLY CALL STAYING HERE LIVING, SEE?
LIVING IS WHEN YOU CONTINUE TO MOVE FORWARD.

H-HUH!? SINCE WHEN DID YOU--!?
BUT IT COULD BE TRUE THAT YOU "DIED".

ピｯ‥
YOU WHO CALLS GIVING IN TO PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES HAPPINESS,
IS THE SAME AS DEAD COMPARED TO THE OTHERS WHO TRY TO MOVE FORWARD.

!?
TRYING TO MAKE EXCUSES NOW?

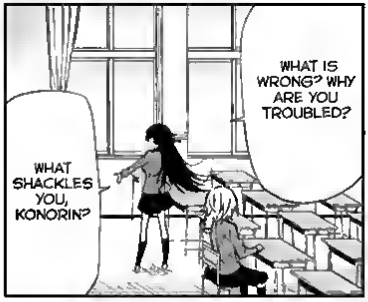
B-BUT.../
"BUT"?

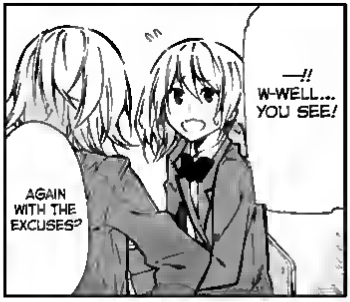
FUFU...
WHAT A BAD MOUTH.
EEEH!?
THAT'S OBVIOUSLY A LIE.
EH!? KAMIMU-RA-SAN!?
YOU'RE NOT THE REAL ME!?

T-THEN... WHO ARE YOU REALLY...?
WHO I AM IS NOT A BIG DEAL.
THE QUESTION IS...
WHAT IS REALLY...
HAPPENING TO YOU.

DON'T YOU THINK SO,
KONO-RIN!
S-SHIRASAKI-KUN'S !!
OOPS, CALLING MYSELF "YOU" IS TOO DISTANT,
SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK, KONORIN?
ARE YOU FINE WITH THIS?
K-KONO-RIN!!!??
ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO BE HAPPY THIS WAY?
TRULY HAPPY?

EVEN THOUGH YOU KNOW A BIT ABOUT THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS WORLD,
ARE YOU FINE JUST LIVING WITH YOUR CURRENT SITUATION?


WHAT IS WRONG? WHY ARE YOU TROUBLED?
WHAT SHACKLES YOU, KONORIN?


—!! W-WELL... YOU SEE!
AGAIN WITH THE EXCUSES?

...!? WELL, I–
WHY DO YOU KNOW THAT AS WELL!?

...BUT, I'M A ROBOT, AND..
ORDERS ARE ABSOLUTE?

HUMANS...
SHOULD MOVE AS THEIR DESIRES DICTATE...
THAT'S WHAT I THINK.
HAVEN'T YOU DEFIED YOUR ORDERS ONCE, KONORIN?
DON'T THINK MUCH ABOUT THAT NOW!
I KNOW IT, KONORIN.
FU EEE H!?
YOU LIKE...
SHIRASAKI SHUUSHI, DON'T YOU?

.....!!
YOU CONSCIOUSLY DEFIED YOUR ORDERS FOR THE SAKE OF THE ONE YOU LIKE.

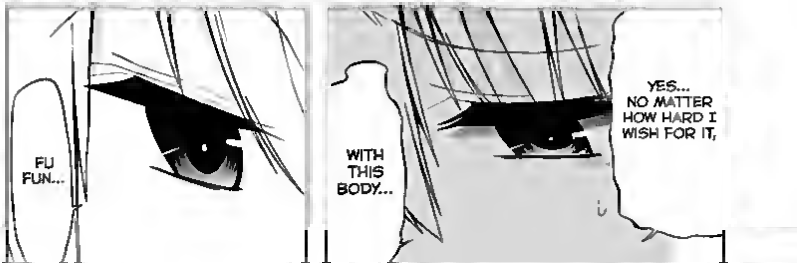
ISN'T THAT NICE?
WHY DON'T YOU PUSH THROUGH WITH YOUR FEELINGS?

...B-BUT... BECAUSE OF ME... SHIRASAKI-KUN...GOT DECIEVED...
THEN ALL THE MORE SO. YOU HAVE TO APOLO-GIZE TO HIM.
EVEN IF I DO... I DON'T THINK HE'LL FORGIVE ME...
ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY?

IF YOU REALLY FEEL BAD ABOUT IT, SHOULDN'T YOU STOP RUNNING AWAY AND APOLOGIZE?
EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT FORGIVEN...
HUMANS ARE AWKWARD BEINGS.
IF THEY DON'T PROPERLY SHOW IT IN THEIR WORDS AND ATTITUDES, THEIR MOTIVES WILL NEVER BE KNOWN, LET ALONE THEIR TRUE SELVES.
.....
YOU SAID IT WAS "LOVE".
.....
ARE YOU FINE WITH ENDING IT LIKE THIS, KONORIN?
YOU SATISFIED? HAPPY?

OF COURSE I'M NOT!!
I CAN DO IT IF I CAN! IF I HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE!
BUT NOW... I'M...
FUFU..

LET'S SEE.
RIGHT NOW, THE CIRCUM-STANCES HAVE BEEN FORCEFULLY CHANGED BECAUSE OF THEM
AND YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.


YES... NO MATTER HOW HARD I WISH FOR IT,
WITH THIS BODY...
FU FUN...

I CAN'T DO ANYTHING!!!
IF SO, LET ME JUST—
THEN HOW ABOUT I TURN YOU BACK TO NORMAL?

YOU CAN...DO THAT?
IT'S NOT A MATTER OF WHETHER I CAN DO IT OR NOT--

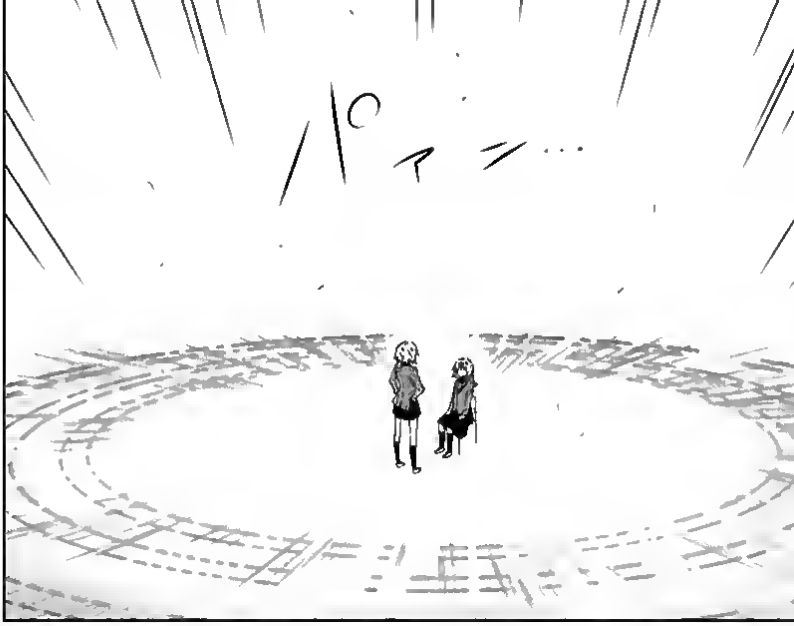
I'LL HELP YOU OUT IF THAT'S YOUR WISH.
....EH!?

IT'S WHETHER YOU REALLY WANT IT TO HAPPEN.

THAT'S THE IMPORTANT THING THERE, ISN'T IT?

.....
.....
I-I...
ギュ.

WANT TO PROPERLY APOLOGIZE WITH MY OWN VOICE!
THAT'S WHY I BEG YOU! TURN ME BACK TO NORMAL!

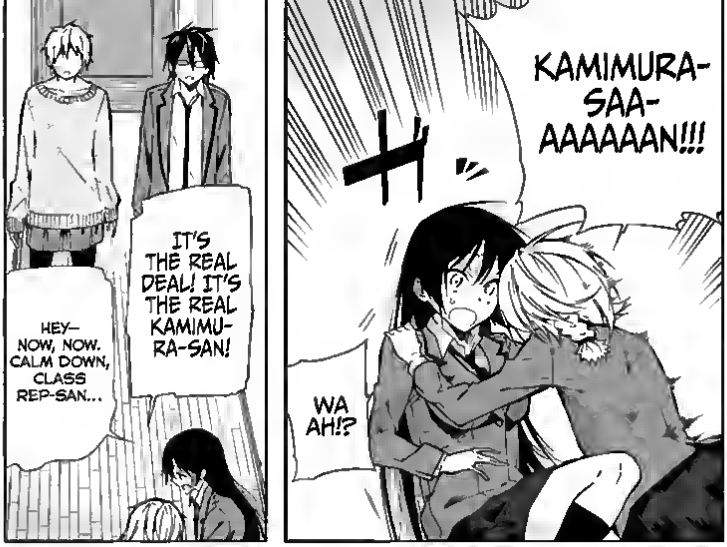

パァン…

THAT'S IT. THINK. WORRY. REGRET.
BUT AFTER THAT, LOOK FOR THE RIGHT PATH AND MOVE FORWARD.

THAT'S WHAT BEING HUMAN IS ABOUT.
HUMANS ARE NOT EMPTY SHELLS; THEY HAVE HEARTS.

...JUST WHO IN THE WORLD
ARE YOU?
FU FU.
NOW, WAKE UP
AND THEN...
IT'S A SECRET.

WAFUU?
UUU?
HUH? WHERE AM I?
OH, ARE YOU AWAKE NOW, CLASS REP-SAN?
MMH
MY SHAPE? WHAT DID YOU MEAN BY THAT, CLASS REP-SAN?
CLASS REP-SAN?
IT'S IN KAMIMURA-SAN'S SHAPE AGAIN...?
EH?


HEY— NOW, NOW. CALM DOWN, CLASS REP-SAN...
IT'S THE REAL DEAL! IT'S THE REAL KAMIMURA-SAN!
WA AH!?
KAMIMURA-SAA-AAAAAAN!!!

....
...EH?
I'M VERY, VERY SORRY!
BECAUSE OF ME, YOU WERE PUT IN A DANGEROUS SITUATION!
I'M SO SORRY!

I'M SO SORRY, KAMIMURA-SAN!
ARE YOU BACK TO NORMAL, CLASS REP-SAN!?
I DON'T THINK YOU WILL FORGIVE ME
BUT...I JUST HAVE TO PUT IT OUT HERE...
YOU GOT IN TROUBLE FOR HELPING ME!
I SHOULD BE THE ONE APOLOGIZ-ING!!
CLASS REP-SAAAAAN!!!

.....
....
NO! IT'S MY FAULT!
THAT'S NOT TRUE! I DECEIVED YOU, SO I'M THE ONE AT FAULT!
WELCOME BACK, CLASS REP-SAN.
YEAH. I'M BACK, KAMIMURA-SAN.

LET ME SAY THANKS TO YOU AS WELL.
CLASS REP...
Uuh
Thank Goodness
UWAA AAAH
THANK YOU FOR SAVING ME, KAMIMURA-SAN.
SHIRASAKI-KUN, I'M GLAD...
AAH...

THIS ISN'T THE TIME TO BLUSH! I SHOULD APOLOGIZE TO SHIRASAKI-KUN TOO!
O-OH NOOO! I BECAME STRANGELY CONSCIOUS OF HIM!

(C)

AAAH...
AH... WELL... I...

CALM DOWN! FORGET ABOUT IT! CLASS REP IS FINALLY BACK TO NORMAL, SO...
?
あぁ
I-I JUST REMEMBERED! CLASS REP WAS CLINGING TO ME EARLIER!

.....
U-UHMM, I'M SORRY FOR DECEIVING YOU...UHMM..
N-NO PROBLEM! DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. I-I'M GLAD YOU ARE SAFE!

はははは
LISTEN SHUUSHI! DISTANCE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IS AN IMPORTANT THING TO NOTE!
THE TWO OF YOU BLUSHING JUST BECAUSE YOU MADE EYE CONTACT IS UNFORGIVABLE!!

WHAT THE HELL'S WITH THIS PASTEL PINK ATMOSPHERE!!!!

NOW! LOOK AT ME AND SHOW ME YOUR BLUSHING FACE, JUST FOR A MOMENT, SO I CAN RECALL IT FOR ETERNITY!
YOU BETTER TAKE NOTE OF YOUR DISTANCE FROM ME.

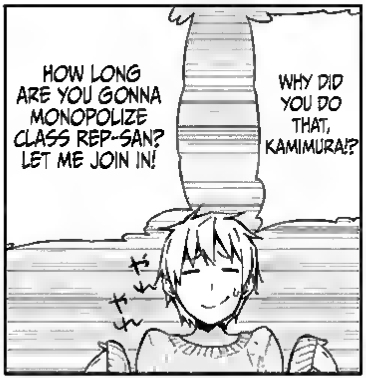
WAIT, WHAT? HIRUMA-KUN, YOUR CLOTHES...
...AAH, THINGS HAPPENED ON OUR SIDE TOO. I'LL EXPLAIN.
MY GOODNESS. I LOST DECISIVELY TO CLASS REP THIS TIME
WHAT WILL I DO TO MAKE SHUUSHI TURN HIS GAZE TOWARDS ME .
oh my
.....
LET'S SEE...
UUH!

HUH? JEALOUS??
THAT'S NOT IT, SEE?
EH?
COME ON! AS A WOMAN, PERHAPS YOU ARE JEALOUS IN VARIOUS WAYS...
OOH? KAMIMURA-JOU, ARE YOU ENRAGED AS WELL?
;3°
YOU THINK THAT I'M JEALOUS BECAUSE YOU LIKE SHIRO?
Y-YEAH... THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M FEELING! I DON'T LOOK AT SHIRO THAT WAY!
...HUH?
I'M JUST IRRITATED THAT HE'S TREATING ME LIKE A COMMONPLACE OBJECT!
I WANTED THIS TO BE REMEDIED AT THE SOONEST POSSIBLE TIME! I'M NOT REALLY IN LOVE WITH HIM, SO I DON'T READ INTO IT SO DEEPLY!

KAMIMURA-JOU... PERHAPS YOU ARE UNAWARE...?
.....
I'M SO SORRY I WASN'T ABLE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THAT...
I SEE...SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED.
NOW WE CAN HOLD A CONVERSATION LIKE THIS AGAIN. ISN'T THAT ENOUGH?
DON'T WORRY. IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT THIS HAPPENED ANYWAY.
.....

CLASS REP...
THIS TIME, I WANT TO BE OF HELP TO YOU GUYS, SO LET ME HELP OUT!
THE TRUTH IS...
AAH! THANKS A LOT!
I TOLD YOU NOT TO WORRY. IF YOU JUST STAY AND NEVER GO AWAY—
BUT RIGHT NOW, I'M STILL SPACING OUT, SO I CAN'T REMEMBER WELL I'M SORRY...
I WANTED TO TELL YOU EVEN JUST A BIT OF WHAT I KNOW,

Aah...
.....
.....
Y-yeah! T-t-t-that's it!
WHIRLS AROUND
Ah! Well! Friends! As friends!


HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA MONOPOLIZE CLASS REP-SAN? LET ME JOIN IN!
WHY DID YOU DO THAT, KAMIMURA!?

ドンーーン
OWW!

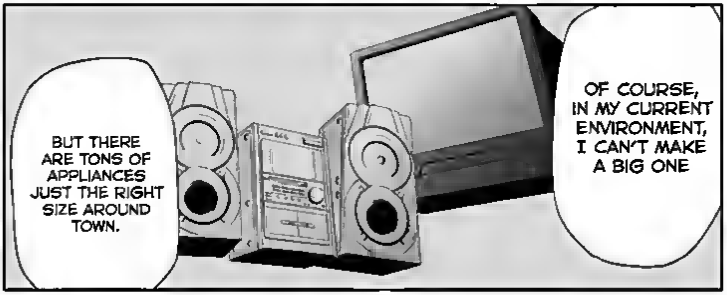
YONEKURA'S DOING HER BEST OUT THERE,
BUT I WONDER IF IT'S GOING WELL ON HER SIDE?

OH YEAH...

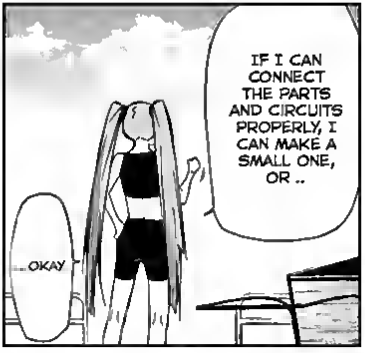
HMMM...
THE TRIAL PRODUCT WORKED. IF IT DID THIS MUCH DAMAGE, OTHER CONTRAPTIONS COULD DO IT.
HANDMADE EXPLOSIVES LACK STABILITY AND ARE ESSENTIALLY NOT MADE FOR EXCAVATION, SO THEY'RE NOT RELIABLE.
I COULD MAKE SOME DIGGING DEVICE BY PUTTING THE INDUSTRIAL TOOLS AND SPARE WOOD I FOUND AROUND TOWN TOGETHER...
WITH A ROBOT'S BODY, THAT TOOL MADE WITH BASIC TECHNOLOGY CAN STILL BE USED NO MATTER HOW HEAVY IT IS.

...THOUGH I CAN'T BE SURE WITH JUST THAT...
.....
A DRILL!

WHEN IT COMES TO MAKING HOLES, WE DON'T NEED A TOOL WITH EXTREME BLASTING POWER, BUT A TOOL WITH A STABLE DRILLING SPEED AND PACE.
INDEED... A DRILL IS MORE THAN ENOUGH TO DO THE JOB!


OF COURSE, IN MY CURRENT ENVIRONMENT, I CAN'T MAKE A BIG ONE
BUT THERE ARE TONS OF APPLIANCES JUST THE RIGHT SIZE AROUND TOWN.

THAT'S A LOGICAL IDEA.
IT HAS TO BE A DRILL. NO OBJECTIONS.


IF I CAN CONNECT THE PARTS AND CIRCUITS PROPERLY, I CAN MAKE A SMALL ONE, OR ..
...OKAY

TN: -tan is a honorific used for things one finds cute. Next time, Yonekura creates the drill that pierces the heavens!